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# Solano CHP Commander Promoted

By Catherine Bowen  
*cbowen@thereported.com*



After almost seven years as commander of the Solano County California Highway Patrol Office, Capt. Sue Ward is moving on and moving up. Ward, who joined the Solano County office in January 2004, was promoted to assistant chief of the CHP Golden Gate Division.

Friday marked the end of her tenure in Fairfield and she is preparing to step into her new position as assistant chief on September 1, leaving her no lag time between roles.

Just change the emblem on the shirt collar and go to work," she said with a laugh. Ward has been dividing her time between tying up loose ends within the Solano department and attending meetings for her new role. You don't want to leave anything undone, so I've been frantically trying to close things up because I don't want to leave anything for a new commander coming in," she said. Ward started her career in West Los Angeles at 24 and has now been with the highway patrol for almost 25 years.

After graduating from Biola University with a degree in business, she decided to take another career path after talking with a friend whose brother-in-law worked for CHP.

"It sounded fun and I thought, 'Well I'm not ready to sit behind a desk just yet, I'll apply for that,'" she said. "And it took off from there and I've loved making that choice." Still, Ward has not been devoid of her share of challenges, particularly when it comes to being a woman in what is often perceived as a "man's world."

"You've got to do better than anybody else to make up for that stigma 'Oh, you're just a girl' type of thing" she said. "So you kind of have that in the back of your mind - I did anyway. Going through that, I always wanted to do better or work harder so that no one could say that was an issue."

She also takes pride in trying to do the best she can in her job, whatever it might be. "You don't want to be known as someone who's not pulling their weight,"

Ward said. She said she chose CHP specifically because it is a statewide agency which kept her from getting locked in at one specific agency or city where she would have to spend her entire career.

With the CHP you can move around, you can go different places, you can transfer and I have throughout the course of my career," Ward said.

Ward has moved back and forth from Los Angeles, Sacramento and the Bay Area multiple times before settling in Solano County where she plans to stay, even after her promotion.

After testing for the assistant chief position almost two years ago Ward only learned about the opening with the Golden Gate Division last month in what she refers to as the "ninth hour" before her name would be taken off the list, which is cleared after two years.

While she says her new position will be an adjustment, she thinks it will be significantly easier than her promotion from officer to sergeant, which she says is one of the more difficult transitions.

"At this stage in your career you basically have the policies and procedures and all that kind of stuff, so it's just a matter of stepping into a different role and realizing what your job is as an assistant chief to help and mentor commanders and be there for the department."

Ward said there are five potential candidates within the department hoping to take on her role as captain and she expects her replacement to be named by the end of the week.

Ward has nothing but praise for the organization to which she has dedicated herself.

"I'm blue and gold all the way, I love the Highway Patrol," she said. And as for her time with the Fairfield department, she says she wouldn't change a thing.

"I've loved every minute of it and I love being here in Solano," she said.